

THE BELL RINGER

Montgomery Bell Academy

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29 August 2005

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Life Of Pi Finds Life at MBA

by David Wheeler
News Editor

As everyone who picks up this paper today is well aware, something was a little different about summer reading this year. A new category was added in addition to the required books for the class and the optional books to read. For the first time students gazed upon this year's experiment: an all-school read of Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*.

The administration had been toying with the idea of having an all-school read for some time. The main goal of the program this year is to build a common experience for all the students. Whether you liked the book or not, you, like all of the other students and all of the faculty and staff (even Chad Breedlove, the trainer), had to get through it. Although "Sparknotes" was likely overwhelmed with searches for the book, the "scholarly" website did not offer a summary. Every student was required to work through the story. Therefore,

throughout the year any two people at Montgomery Bell will have at least one thing to talk about, even if no one wants to talk about it.

Another goal for the program was the possibility of building summer reading into other subjects besides English without adding to the workload over the summer. The sophomores experienced a double dose of this new philosophy by reading Edmund Morgan's biography, *Ben Franklin*, for history. *Life of Pi* seemed like a great choice that could relate to other subjects besides just English. Furthermore, Mr. Gioia wants the book to help solidify how important reading is. By adding a modern book that is a little more fun and interesting than the long-winded *All The King's Men* or the just plain boring *Red Sky at Morning*, the headmaster hopes that students will one day see reading as fun in addition to fundamental.

As plans to institute an all-school read became more concrete and sure, a committee was set up to help

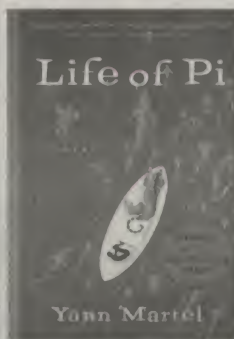
choose a book. After discussing several books, they finally decided on *Life of Pi* by Yann Martel.

They thought that this book represented the best middle ground of all the things they were looking for. It could be interesting to the seventh graders as well as challenging for the seniors. The book represented a middle ground between a deep intellectual work and a good bedtime story.

Martel's novel also could fit in to almost every subject. History teachers could discuss Pi's unique blend of religions. Science teachers could talk about survival skills or relationships

between animals. Even the math teachers could talk about the main character's name, Pi.

Furthermore, *Life of Pi* fits into a category which has been drastically underrepresented on MBA's summer reading lists. Unlike almost all of the other books read this summer, it is a contemporary novel. With a copyright in 2001, the novel is younger than every single student and teacher at MBA. I don't know of any other book on the reading list as



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Continued on p. 6

MBA Theatre in Scotland: Critics Love Us and a Student Awakens

by Maclean Grindell
Theatre Correspondent

"Perspective" is a word whose meaning has become quite clear over the past few weeks.

Everything I have done in the past few years has only affected the inhabitants of a small part of a small city in a state that represents 1/50 of one country. But two weeks ago, I, along with 18 other cast members, was challenged to do something greater, something whose effect would span across oceans and dazzle minds from other countries around the world. We would produce and perform *As I Lay Dying* before an international audience.

After months of telephone calls, "improv" nights, marathons, concession selling, and basic door-to-door knocking, we had raised enough money to send 19 cast and crew members to perform in the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland. Last year's actors had done the hard work in the *Foreigner* to receive the honor to be invited to the Festival, a prize given to very few high schools, and now it was our turn to put the effort into getting us there.

Our last night in America was spent performing *As I Lay Dying* at Chaffin's Barn, a theatrical venue just west of Nashville. This production was

uhmm... well, very interesting to say the least. Whichever way you like to see it, as good preparation or unusual torture, Dr. Fuller made us perform in an area in the round which meant that we were surrounded by the audience on three sides and had very little backstage. To say this was a difficult challenge is an understatement; it would be like a coach telling players in football two hours before that night's game that instead of playing the field long ways, it would be

played on the narrow ends with a line of scrimmage stretching 100 yards that had to be filled by the same number of teammates, so adapt as needed. Except for Rob Heasley collapsing on the stage after running head first into a metal pole, we adequately adapted and produced a pretty flawless show. Only later would it become apparent why Dr. Fuller put us through such agony.

Well, you can imagine how much sleep a bunch of high school teenagers got the night before they were to be in London, but I can certainly tell you how

much sleep they wish they had gotten after arriving. Staying awake for an entire overseas flight is a mistake I am sure never ever to make again. We arrived at Gatwick, England around 7:00AM local time which was 1:00 in the morning for us Nashvillians, a perfect time for a half-day tour of London. Now London is probably one of the most amazing places I have been, but at this point all I wanted to be staring at were the backs of my eyelids, a desire that unfortunately would not be satisfied for the next week.

After our tour, we arrived at the famous Globe Theater. A theater should be a place where one can sit and witness the spectacle for the mind, but standing for the entire performance of *The Tempest* without intermission connected my mind and body with Shakespeare in a way I am not sure I ever want to experience again. After having breached the 24 hours of staying awake mark, being forced, and I mean forced, to stand amongst a crowd for over two and a half hours was a daunting feat that I am not sure how I survived. But all in all, London was a blast, and having my fellow cast members there to joke around with (and things got pretty darn goofy that first night) made it all the better.

But after that little side show in London, reality hit hard after arriving in Edinburgh. After two short days in England, we were on our way by train to



Seniors (l to r) Clayton Lainhart, William Schuller, Michael Schuller, Martin Weick

Continued on p. 5



THE BELL RINGER

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Letters to the Editor are encouraged, and can be delivered to its office, the Faculty Advisors, the Editors, or sent to bellringer@fmc.montgomerybell.com (simply type 'Bell Ringer' into First Class). These letters must be signed; The Bell Ringer neither publishes anonymous submissions of opinions or articles nor permits individuals to remain unidentified unless protected by other rules of confidentiality at MBA. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

The staff of The Bell Ringer prepares all copy, headlines, and photographs at Montgomery Bell Academy. Franklin Web Printing in Franklin, Tennessee, prints the paper.

From the Oval Office

Deon Gaines
Student Body President

Welcome back, students and faculty, to the upcoming 2005-2006 year. I'm very excited about how great this year can be for the school. I feel that in all classes there are great leaders ready to represent the school well, and the senior class is going to be remembered for being one of the best. The Student Council this year is going to be very exciting. We have great Student Body officers consisting of Scott Hearon, vice-president, Matthew Behar, secretary, Brooks Tate, treasurer, and me, Deon Gaines, president. I want the student body to know that the Student Council is here for the students, and we plan on working as hard as possible to make the year successful and fun. Seniors, let's enjoy the last year on the Hill and set a great example for the other classes to follow. If there are any questions or comments about student affairs, do not hesitate to talk to any members of the Student Council. Thanks, and let's start the year of right!

Seniors, We're Here Now

Kevin Seitz
Editor-in-Chief

And there you have it. Summer is over, officially. We dragged it out longer than any other school in Nashville, but the cuffs have been buttoned, the opening speeches delivered, the sweats and schedules distributed. There's no turning back.

They always threaten that one day you will have to be the one to step up. "Taking Responsibility" they call it. "Yes," we reply, "and we trust that when that time comes, we shall be far different and far greater men," but nevertheless, we've arrived, and all of the older kids have left. They grew scruffy beards, laughed through their last few weeks at home, packed their bags, and drove away. But the wheels of this place never stop spinning.

The parking sticker I have has an "SR" before the numbers to denote the lot beside the gym, and they've changed all the speeches to include "seniors" this time around. A title like that seems like something you earn by a lifetime of service or something into which you were born. I know I do not belong on that list. Senior year takes place far from our reach, on the other side of quads and on movie screens, where everything is as we're always trying to pretend: football players who drive through walls of boulder-sized linemen, intellectuals so powerful that they take classes in rooms I've never been allowed to see, and everyone who steps forward is followed through to glorious accomplishment, taken in stride, without the slightest stumble along the way.

We're there now. Whether earned or forced upon us, another year has laid itself at our feet, but this one is clearly more urgent. No one ever told us to stop, tie your shoes, and take a good look, because twenty yards ahead lies the ledge where you will become who you will be. Yet, the doors have been

unlocked, and the countless positions of everyday potential lie suddenly available. "Opportunity" has been repeated too many times from too many podiums to still mean something tangible and real anymore, but as soon as you remove the unfortunate blinders of routine, the truth stands bare and unavoidable. MBA and your experience here will be exactly what you make it this year. Nothing more and nothing less.

This morning the world did not suddenly decide to rely on us to carry it, and our new responsibility has not arrived all at once, unannounced and uninvited. We are now who we've been trying to be since the day we set foot on this campus, and this is the very time for which we spent years in the upper seats of assembly watching the bigger kids carry boldly onward so that we might follow meekly behind.

The very thought of such a task scares me. There is no longer any way to lower my head and mumble my words so that I might be a nameless boy and the demanding gaze might pass on to another. What we say is what the rest of the world hears, and what we do is what they see, for better or worse. And I could transition into declaring that the *Bell Ringer* lives only through your contributions, and it thrives only if individuals are willing to arise and accept its offer to act as a voice and a window. But hopefully without tripping over any other Ciceronian tactics, and with a slight hope of eloquence, I can finish by saying this, to all the classes. However it may appear, we're not here at MBA to pass through its walls and be churned through its orders, but rather to take its reins and pass these finite days through ourselves and the choices that are ours alone, with the hope that we just might create something of our own, within or without, and thus be proud and know we arrived where we wanted to be all along.

WRITE FOR THE BELL RINGER



VISIT OUR BOOTH AT THE ACTIVITY
FAIR ON SEPTEMBER 8TH

Cross Country Preview: Great Expectations

by David Reynolds
Staff Writer

After three long months of summer training in scorching temperatures, fighting through the aches and pains that come with 50-mile weeks, the cross-country team sweated its way into shape and is poised for a strong season.

The myriad miles were run all over the state, ranging from Percy Warner Park in Nashville to the two-a-days at the University of the South in Seawane. This season, through the combination of various long distance jogs, tempo miles, and interval workouts, the veteran team (5 of the top 7 return) plans to dominate the mid-state area with its depth.

The varsity looks to be about the same as last year, with seniors Bracey Wilson, David Reynolds, and Kevin Seitz leading the way, while sophomore Tyler Ramsden and juniors Stockton Beveridge and Hayes Arnold also figure to earn a spot in the prestigious top 7. The final spot in the varsity top 7 remains up for grabs with senior Michael Pierce, junior Jonathan Ury, sophomore Daniel Givens, and freshman Baker Mulhern all vying for the last spot.

Barring any cataclysmic injuries to the varsity this year, the team intends to be among the top in the state. Defending its Metro championship (by defeating Father Ryan, USN, FRA, and Brentwood High) and dethroning the Bumbalough-less, yet still extremely talented Brentwood Academy for a state championship are the lofty goals set for the season.

Senior Bracey Wilson, commenting on the difficult goals for the season, said "We have to reach for the stars using our Southern grit." The success of the team depends on its ability to stay focused mentally and physically on the training throughout September and October. All of the omens point towards a strong season, so please come out and support cross-country, as the Big Red begins its meets at Vaughn's Gap and Steeplechase.

PSAT Scores Show Continued Improvement

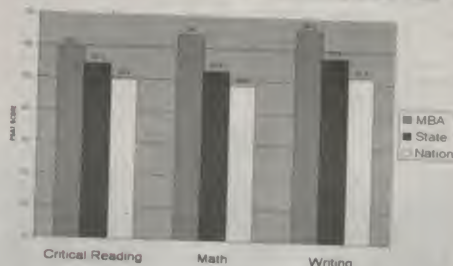
by Anne Christeson
Faculty Advisor

This year's senior class (class of '06) improved in all three sections of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) over the previous senior class's ('05) scores, despite the fact that the format of the test was altered, eliminating sections on which MBA students traditionally excelled. A study completed this summer as part of a Davis grant by MBA faculty members Dr. Jim Shackelford and Mrs. Anne Christeson analyzed the performance of MBA students on the last two PSATs, and the results of their analysis suggested some interesting conclusions.

The Critical Reading portion of the test, formerly known as Verbal, now eliminates analogies, a section which had proved particularly easy for MBA students in the past. Nevertheless, this year's seniors scored almost 5 points higher than the state average and 10 points higher than the nation, and also bettered last year's seniors by a full point.

The Math section also eliminated a section of the test which MBA students had done well on, the quantitative comparisons. Surprisingly, our scores this year were 11 points higher than the state, almost 16 points higher than the nation,

the "Score Report Plus," which each student receives along with his scores, can help students focus their attention more productively on areas in which they need to improve. They also encourage students to learn more about test-taking skills by attending the three classes



and a full point higher than last year's seniors.

The Writing portion remained unchanged this year, but even so, our current seniors bested the state and nation by 11 and 15 points, and surpassed last year's class by almost 3 points.

Dr. Shackelford and Mrs. Christeson believe that closer attention to

scheduled immediately prior to this fall's PSAT. The classes will be offered during activity period on October 4, 6, and 11, and the PSAT will be administered on October 12.

The full report of Dr. Shackelford and Mrs. Christeson's analysis is available as a PowerPoint slide show on MBA's website.



AP Program Strong and Still Growing at MBA

by Kevin Thomas
Entertainment Editor

MBA students had very successful results on the AP examinations in May of 2005. Two hundred six total students took 507 AP exams, almost two exams per student. These difficult advanced-placement exams are scored on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest possible score.

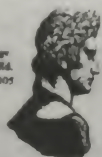
Of the 507 examinations taken, 70% of the scores were either 4's or 5's; 91% of the scores were three or higher; and the average score was 3.95. These scores, obviously, are superb grades on these challenging tests. One ninth-grader, twenty-nine tenth-graders, sixty-three eleventh-graders, and one hundred

thirteen seniors took at least one AP examination last May, according to Mr. Giffen, college counselor. In order to take these exams, a student usually must be taking an AP course, with the exception of some strong students in honors courses.

The AP courses MBA offers are the same courses as those given across the country, using a standard curriculum and syllabus everywhere. MBA's program attains such high scores on the AP examinations because of the strong instructional level of the teachers and the dedication and talent of the MBA students.

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The Potter Phenomenon

by Alec McGuffey
Features Editor

Looking back at past generations, it is easy to find a unique label or name for each: everyone born from 1946-1964 is labeled a "baby boomer" because of the huge birth rate in that era; the "Millennium Generation," people born from 1981-1995, are the largest consumers in the history of the U.S. At the current rate, it

series. Numerous books have actually been written analyzing every possible sign hidden within the Potter books. "It's so captivating because she gives you clues, but you really don't know what's going to happen until the end," Mehta adds.

Rowling is famous for her breathtaking plot twists, many of which are impossible to detect beforehand. Hershel's brother Patrick, a junior, found



seems we may well be on our way to dubbing everyone born after 1997 as the Potter Generation.

There are over 275 million Harry Potter books in print worldwide, translated into 42 languages, making it the third bestselling book of all time, only behind Chinese dictator Mao Tse-Tung's personal narrative (900 million) and the Holy Bible (6 billion). Consider that most successful books never sell more than 50,000 copies. What was once seen as just a popular children's story is now recognized as a series that has literally changed the world.

While some, including the Pope himself, have renounced the books, claiming they promote witchcraft and magic, most have seen the Harry Potter phenomenon for what it really is: a way to show kids once again the joys of reading and tear them from the television and computer screens. And it worked. I remember discovering the series in sixth grade, several years after the first book was published. After reading *The Sorcerer's Stone* in less than a week (normally, I spent months reading books, switching from one to another whenever I got bored), I immediately bought the second. From that point on, I, along with half of the kids in the country, was hooked.

Eighth-grader Hershel Mehta caught Potter fever in the fourth-grade "during the hype when everyone had cut scars on their foreheads." He quickly adds that he personally was never part of the crowd with lightning-shaped scars. Hershel likes the series because Rowling has a tendency to place within the books cleverly hidden hints, which foreshadow major events in later volumes to the

out about the series around the same time as his brother. "I really like the fantasy aspects of the book, especially the magic," he says.

While some parents may try to shelter their kids from the "witchcraft" in the books, the majority see the series as solely fantasy and wisely take very little in the books seriously. Around the time most current MBA students began to read the books, bookstores began to have midnight parties, a tradition normally reserved for films, to celebrate the release of the newest addition to the series, and soon even adults, who had previously only bought the books for their kids, were captivated by Potter.

And then came the movies. By the time the first film came out in 2001, the few dozen people in the world who hadn't heard of Harry Potter had been brutally enlightened, thanks to the massive marketing campaign for the movie. The film made over \$300 million in the U.S. alone and paved the way for yet another storm of Potter merchandise. There were action figures, lunch boxes, fake wands, and broomsticks. Even owls grew enormously in popularity.

Apart from product sales related to Harry Potter, one of the most impressive effects the boy wizard has had on the world is the Potterization of our everyday lives. In 2003, the word muggle, a term straight from the series meaning a non-magical person, was officially added to the Oxford Dictionary. Also, Quidditch, the sport Harry plays on broomstick, has gained a large following, despite the fact that to play successfully, the player needs to fly. There are several leagues set up around the world, and there is even a local team: the Tennessee Tigers. And just one

month ago, Mugglenet.com, a Harry Potter fan webpage, started its own Podcast, and within a few days it was the number one iTunes broadcast in the world. Anyone can see that Harry Potter is more than just a book. It is a series that has simultaneously changed the face of the publishing industry, gotten kids to start reading again, given an upstart to film studios, and changed our entire culture. And it will continue to do so for at least another six or seven years, when the final film will come out, and a new generation will be introduced to an

eleven-year-old with a lightning-shaped scar.

Now for the sixth book: *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. Without a doubt, this is the darkest and most mature of the series. Violent murders and bloody fights abound.

Characters who have previously just been written as harmless bullies have evolved into evil villains who now actually pose threats to Harry and his friends. J.K. Rowling has also upped the level of romance. *Half-Blood Prince* features a great deal of book-ups, and the author must have used the word "snogging" at least a hundred times. This is to be expected, however, since Harry is indeed growing up (he's 16 in this book) and has finally noticed that there are indeed girls in the wizarding

world.

This penultimate addition to the series introduces new characters but also leaves us wondering what has happened to others. We have hardly seen *You-Know-Who* these past two books, and by

the end of *Prince* I was confused as to why the book is titled as it is. The majority of the plot is similar to the past five books: Harry goes to Hogwarts, plays Quidditch, and in the process, discovers something new about Voldemort's past, all the while trying to discover another character's secret plan and not get killed doing so.

By the end of *Prince*, however, it is clear that the final book in the series will be nothing like the past six. Rowling, it seems, is going to experiment with a new style, and I believe it is going to work brilliantly. All in all, *Half-Blood Prince* is the best book in the series thanks to its darker tone, sense of coming closure, and Rowling's improved storytelling. Waiting the next few years will be tough, but when the time comes for the release of the final book, I'll be in the bookstore at midnight one final time.

News Brief

Press Box Dedicated to Floyd Elliott

During the summer, MBA received a generous gift to construct a new press box at Tommy Owen Stadium. The gift was given to honor Coach Floyd Elliott, who has skillfully and honorably served the MBA Football Program for more than 25 years.

On Friday, October 2, MBA plays MUS; and all football alumni who were on a team during the years Coach Elliott has worked are invited to attend a dedication and naming ceremony for the new press box. Alumni will gather on the track at 6:45 p.m. and accompany Coach Elliott and his family on the field for a brief ceremony. Your attendance at this event is greatly appreciated.

Sculpture For Tommy Owen

Tommy Owen coached football at MBA for all but six seasons from 1953 until 1992 and he compiled a record of 251-98-11. He was, from the first, a dedicated teacher who believed that academics were of primary importance, but that athletics were a fundamental part of education.

Coach Owen loved the game of football and believed that it demanded everything, both physically and mentally, that a young man had to give. His coaching was a continuing lesson about discipline, teamwork, and commitment to excellence. Year after year his teams displayed the highest levels of preparatory attention to detail, poise, and sportsmanship, and decade after decade

his players left MBA with a deeper understanding of such qualities as dignity, responsibility, sacrifice, integrity, and trust.

To honor Owen and his enduring legacy at MBA, a statue, "Coach and His Players"



Tommy Owen: MBA Coach 1953-92

will be unveiled at halftime of the MBA/Trinity game on September 27. Please mark your calendar for this exciting football game and special halftime ceremony.



Floyd Elliott, "Coach E"



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Theatre

continued from p.1

the country which we would call home for the next ten days. After being cooped up in a small train full of thespians for five hours, desperately hopping off that train into a cold and lightly raining climate accompanied by the sound of bagpipes would have made for a great *Adios* commercial. This brain-splitting scene would be my first impression of Scotland, and boy!!!, what a first impression it was.

All these people we had met on the train were to share our "house" for the remainder of our stay in Edinburgh. Imagine staying in an entire college dorm full of musical theater kids where as early as 6:30 every morning you can hear the band "Who" from *Sensational the Musical* warming up in the distance outside your window. There was more drama taking place on that college campus than all the Soap Operas on television combined, and most of the time I found myself hiding locked up in my room desperately trying to get *Aida* songs out of my head. Breakfast back home has now become a sacred hour for me where I can eat in silence without being surrounded by a dining hall full of different groups from Hawaii to New York chanting songs from *Jesus Christ Superstar* to *Footloose*.

Our first performance took place on Sunday, August, 7th, our third day in Scotland. I have never seen so much energy created in the streets at 8:30 PM by 19 sleep-deprived actors and Michael Jackson. Anxiety and fear can revitalize even the most worn-out body. Dancing to *Thriller* and *Beat It* helped us forget for 5 minutes that fear we had when we first looked upon our stage at the Rocket Venue the day before. I remember standing on that very small stage perplexed as to why there was a wall where the stage left exit should normally be, and how the stage right exit consisted of a stair case, and how backstage was mostly in a different room where you

couldn't even hear or see when to come on for your scene. Now I am not an idiot, but when Dr. Fuller announced that all entrances and exits would have to be mirrored, I had a serious headache. Finally, at that point I understood the punishment of Chaffin's Barn, and I was so grateful that Dr. Fuller put us through that obstacle course so that now when it mattered we wouldn't be like deer in the headlights and would be able to dodge difficult scene changes and stage directions that were thrown at us.

I will forever remember that first show. I can't describe that feeling I had while watching my fellow actors perform from where I awaited my entrance. We had been transformed in some way, it was like we had truly become our characters and honestly could feel the hardships they went through. Dr. Fuller had taught us how to see our characters as desperate, that this was their last chance to tell their story before they were forced back into the book, and that it was up to us as actors to bring them to life. Will Holt's screams of sorrow when he portrays the tragedy of losing his mother to the flooded river will forever ring in my ears. I truly lived these scenes. When I walked onto that stage, I felt that I was stepping into the Bundren's house. I felt true sadness and remorse, almost as if I had committed the crimes and not the character I was portraying. It was an incredibly empowering feeling that circulated throughout the entire cast. The small stage helped pull the audience in closer and left them dumbstruck and in awe as our play progressed. That first night we received applause after every scene and an incredible, thunderous ovation at the end of our performance. But there was no time to greet our audience. As soon as our final bow took place, we were unscrewing and taking apart our set at rapid speed for we had to be out of there in 15 minutes to let the next group come in and set up their show. Riding back to our dorm at Pollock Hall that night, we felt like we

weight had been taken off our shoulders. We had succeeded. We had been able to take a show all the way from Nashville to Scotland, set up an entire set in 15 minutes on stage and improve it in such a way that most of us were left just shaking our heads at one another, full of ecstasy on how well we did. When we got back to the dorm, we let everyone know how well we did by whooping and hollering all over campus. And our floor, which consisted of only the MBA guys and Mr. Morrison, was a party scene, as it should have been. And that night we slept. Out of all the nights we had been there, this night was the first time I could let my mind rest at ease.

I was never tired again after that night. The success of our opening and the subsequent shows propelled us through the rest of the trip. Every show after our first was better than the show before it. Even though our next two shows would be in the morning, we kept the energy high and were able to captivate the audience in such a way that we could hear them gasp or hear quiet sobs during the moving portions of our show.

To promote our play, we had various teasers on the Royal Mile. We would subtly lead our mock funeral procession amongst the multitudes of people that crowd this small strip of Edinburgh. I can't say I had ever led a funeral before, but I have to say it was a lot of fun. Shouting at people that I was a sinner while a group of solemn faces and the walking dead followed me with a casket was terribly exciting and exhilarating. If that didn't grab people's attention, I don't know what would.

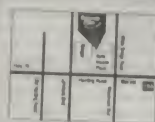
Our last show ended at a grizzly 12:15 in the morning. But I can't say I felt happy at that point. At that very final bow I felt like a part of my soul was leaving me. My character that I had gotten to know so well for the past 9 months was to be put back in a book; never again would his plea for forgiveness be heard. I felt like I

had known all the characters of *As I Lay Dying*, and it was like saying goodbye forever. But I am always reassured when I remember that the stories and songs will be imprinted on the minds of every audience member that saw our show. There is no telling how long the life of my character will continue, but by the apparent grand effect our show had on the viewers, I can gladly say for a very long time.

If we weren't excited enough by the sheer success of our performances, nothing could prepare us for the review we received after opening night. Now, just being reviewed is an honor in itself. And trust me, a lot of other schools complained about not being reviewed, and having seen their show the night before, it was a good thing they weren't. The *Three Weeks* is known for its strict criticism of shows, but we found it to be quite the opposite. The last two sentences pretty much wrapped up the entire review's message, "Both visually stunning and musically sound, I could not believe this was the work of young students. A polished and professional effort, a definite must see." After reading our review we walked the streets of Edinburgh with our heads held high and proud. We had been given 5 out of 5 stars by an international critic. We had proudly represented our school, displaying the highest quality to the world.

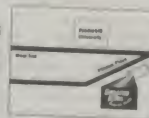
A true knowledge of perspective was ours now. All these countries had come together to create an art that inspires and challenges the mind to open up to the differences of our world and realize if it means leaving our comfort zone. I never knew theater could be such a motivating force until this trip. With my new perspective I know that through theater I can transcend my own little part of the world and spread a message in a unique way that can reach thousands and thousands all over the world.

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Alumni Give Back More Than Money

by Eric Hagemeier
Features Editor

As many know from its advertisement at the conclusion of last year, MBA's summer-job and mentoring program abounds with a number of interesting opportunities for students looking for work over the summer. This summer, the Alumni and Development Office lined up positions for MBA students in a variety of businesses and fields from science to sales. Through his leadership, Mr. Scott O'Neal led students to enthusiastic alumni and others who were happy to offer small apprenticeships.

Nick Anand spent the summer under the tutelage of Sam Harwell at Big Time Toys, an internationally recognized toy company. "It was a lot of fun," Nick said, "and they went out of their way to help me. I got to sit in on sales meetings and make calls to international customers." When asked if he would endorse the program, he said, "Definitely."

While some tried their hands at more obscure jobs, others shadowed professionals in fields of their interests in order to gain better perspectives on them, as John Fontaine did with engineering. John visited four different engineers around Nashville and reported very positively about his experience. "It's not like what you'd learn in college," says John. "I really got to see what they do every day. They did tell me where they went to college, though, and pointed me to a few good schools." John also recommends the summer program fully.

Kevin Seitz shadowed a neurosurgeon and got a "hands-on" education on human anatomy. "Well, I didn't actually touch anything," he admits, "because everything was totally sterile. But I did watch them cut open a guy's neck to do surgery on his spinal cord. And I got paid to do paperwork." Obviously, if these kinds of opportunities are available, there are plenty of interesting ways to spend a summer through MBA's job program.

Mr. O'Neal had more than a few good words about this summer's results. "We had seventy-five students make contacts with professionals," he said, "and most of those turned into summer jobs." For the first year of this program, it has already gotten a great report.

Because MBA is often opposed to students working during the school year, it is pleasing to see administrators organizing jobs for students who do want real-world experience (or even a little pocket change) without taxing their time for academics and athletics. The alumni

and friends of the school involved seem more than happy to give students a leg-up in the business world through this program, so the possibilities for enjoyment and success are boundless.

Interested in engineering, medicine, or another highly-skilled field? The summer might be over, but there are still great mentoring opportunities available for those who wish to take advantage of them. Contact Mr. O'Neal for details.

Student's Photography At Frist

On August 25th, senior Michael Schuller's work was put on display at the Frist Center For the Visual Arts as part of a photographic workshop he attended over the summer. Michael's work will remain on display for several months at that institution as part of that group.

Go see the MBA Thespians in the musical Footloose at Harpeth Hall

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Life of Pi

continued from p. 1

current. For comparison, *Huck Finn* was published in 1885 and *All the King's Men* was published in 1946. Finally, students can learn about and appreciate current literature instead of just the usual classics.

Unlike various other aspects of MBA (cough*exams after winter break*cough), the all-school read was apparently not borrowed from prestigious Princeton University. In fact, when I asked Mr. Gioia and Mr. Coverstone for a school from which they modeled the program, I was directed to two prestigious preparatory schools. Woodberry Forest in Virginia attempts to get the community involved in summer reading by pairing students with an adult for one or two books. The two then correspond about the book via email. St. Andrews, a private school in Delaware, is reading Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, a book that portrays the life of a Jewish family in an America that was taken over by Nazi-sympathizers in 1940. For a comparison, Harpeth Hall "read" a picture book containing 55 pages specializing in "down-and-out migrant families."

The administration has brainstormed several ideas for the book throughout the coming year. The plans

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center on discussions of the book, whether they are in advisory meetings, during classes, at registration, or in a panel-type format in front of the student body. These discussions are expected to center around the new "First Class" discussion board focused specifically on the book. (If you haven't checked it yet, I would recommend it because Mr. Moxley posted a pretty good review which could help you if you "forgot" what you read).

Teachers are also asked to try to build the book into their various classes. The English department plans to teach the book just like any of the other required summer reading books. Some more exciting and different ideas include attempts to get the author, Yann Martel, to speak at an assembly. Also, Mr. Gioia thought it would be a great idea for the seventh graders to build a raft like the one found in the novel.

As for whether or not the program returns next year, the administration is looking for feedback. Mr. Gioia said that student input on the program was "very important" and that we as a student body have a real shot at changing or eliminating the program. Like the influence we had with advisory meetings last year, I suppose. They did say that they want students on the committee next year if another book is chosen. They also mentioned some books which could be considered next year. Mr. Coverstone mentioned the book *Sunflower* about forgiveness for Nazi crimes, and Mr. Whitfield mentioned a book about an AIDS victim in Africa titled *We Are All The Same*.

The faculty members have been split on their enjoyment of the book. The survival part of the story seems to have been a hit. However, while Mr. Coverstone was intrigued about how Pi can make

three diverse religions "compatible" and even "complementary" by taking out the rejection of other religions, Mr. Whitfield, on the other hand, doesn't agree that an individual can throw all of these religions into a pot and take out the parts that one likes and nothing else.

Some teachers were more sparing in their praise of the book. Mr. Tillman said simply, "I didn't like it." Moreover, Coach Rutledge prescribed the book to the football team as a sleeping aid. The faculty are also split over which version of the story is true. Mr. Gioia opts for the more romantic story with the animals on a life raft. However, when asked the same question, Mr. Whitfield replies simply, "that he grew up in a zoo."

But, as Mr. Coverstone pointed out, these kinds of disagreements were the major purpose of the program. If you hated the book, he wants you to tell people that you did and to explain why you formed that opinion. If you think the book represents the downfall of organized religion to shallow faiths like Pi's, he wants you to tell people. If you think Pi really was kidnapped by aliens who planted the story in his mind, he wants you to share your opinion with the student body. (I'm sorry, I was trying to create a tricolon with climax).

So, as you can see if you managed to finish this long article, it could be worse. Instead of another long and boring book on summer reading you get a newer, more recent, shorter, and more interesting (in comparison) book to read. You don't have to like the book. The book doesn't have to impact your life. But we will talk about it, and we may just talk it to death.

Summer Movie Wrap-up

by John Rocco
Entertainment Editor

War Of The Worlds (2 out of 4)

Remade into what was supposed to be one of the greatest movies of the summer, *War Of The Worlds* turned out to be mediocre. I was probably as excited to see this movie as the first time I witnessed *Independence Day* years back. The beginning of the movie was incredible with its special effects, and Steven Spielberg did a superb job of creating the buildup of emotion for the main characters. I felt that I was actually in the movie, and I cared for the characters in the movie. The end destroyed the rest of the movie. Spielberg took the easy way out with a Hollywood ending to please the entire audience. I didn't fall for it and neither did true movie fans. I was pretty disappointed in the movie in all. The aliens didn't frighten me when they were revealed, actually, they looked like shiny, blue monkeys without any legs. Tom Cruise (*Collateral*, *Last Samurai*, *Minority Report*) did a superb job playing the role of a concerned father, and I was really impressed with Dakota Fanning (*Hulk and Seek*, *Mam on Fire*, *The Cat in The Hat*) because she actually played a role that fit her age this time.

The 40-Year-Old Virgin (3.7 out of 4)

Starring Steve Carell (*Anchorman*, *Bruce Almighty*, "Daily Show") and Catherine Keener (*The Interpreter*, *Being John Malkovich*, *Death To Smoochy*), the title of this movie explains most of the story. Before actually watching the movie, I did not have the greatest expectations for it. I thought the movie would be mediocre compared to the other comedies that came out this summer, but it was actually better than *Anchorman*. Watch this movie if you are in the mood for some of the most vulgar statements I've ever heard in a comedy movie.



Wedding Crashers (3.5 out of 4)

Starring Vince Vaughn (*Old School*, *Dodgeball*, *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*) and Owen Wilson (*Starsky & Hutch*, *Hitch*, *Zoolander*, *The Royal Tenenbaums*), I had great expectations for this comedy. After seeing it, I think I would rate this movie as being as funny as *Old School*. With a special guest appearance towards the end and support from Christopher Walken and Rachel McAdams, this comedy is a must see for fans of *Old School*.

Charlie And The Chocolate Factory (3.5 out of 4)

When I first saw the commercial for this movie, I thought it would be really childish. Since Johnny Depp (*Pirates of the Caribbean*, *From Hell*, *Blow*) was the star and Tim Burton (*Big Fish*, *Edward Scissorhands*, *The Nightmare Before Christmas*) was the

director, I decided to see it anyway. It is now one of my favorite movies that have been remade, but do not expect it to be in any way similar to the original.

Four Brothers (3.5 out of 4)

Starring Mark Wahlberg (*I Heart Huckabees*, *Three Kings*, *Boogie Nights*), Tyrese Gibson (*2 Fast 2 Furious*, *Baby Boy*), Andre Benjamin (*Be Cool*, *Outkast*), and Garrett Hedlund (*Friday Night Lights*, *Troy*), I knew this movie would be incredible because any movie with Mark Wahlberg is spectacular. The movie is about four adopted brothers who seek revenge for their dead mother. Not only is it action-packed, but there are also many humorous comments in the movie. Directed by John Singleton (*Boyz n the Hood*, *Shaft* (2000)), this movie is definitely one of the most entertaining films this summer.



Batman Begins (3.8 out of 4)

Starring Christian Bale (*Machinist*, *American Psycho*, *Equilibrium*), Liam Neeson (*Kingdom of Heaven*, *Love Actually*, *Gangs of New York*), and Cillian Murphy (*28 Days Later*, *Red Eye*, *Cold Mountain*), this new, darker version of Batman is just as entertaining as Tim Burton's *Batman* and *Batman Returns*. Since Bale and Murphy are my two favorite actors right now, this is probably the best superhero movie in years. Do not compare this movie to *Batman Forever* and *Batman And Robin*, two of the worst movies created, because this new version does not have any relevance to the previous ones.

Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo (0.1 out of 4)

The sequel to *Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo* is by far the worst movie I've seen this summer. I didn't really even enjoy the first one, and Rob Schneider (*50 First Dates*, *The Hot Chick*, *The Animal*) is probably in the worst movies ever, except for Vin Diesel. Do not watch this movie.

Red Eye (2.7 out of 4)

Starring Cillian Murphy (*28 Days Later*, *Batman Begins*, *Cold Mountain*) and Rachel McAdams (*The Notebook*, *Mean Girls*, *Wedding Crashers*), this suspense film directed by Wes Craven actually turned out to be a twist between a horror movie and a chick-flick. The first commercial portrayed the movie so much differently than the movie was. Most of the movie goes back and forth, with Murphy and McAdams beating each other senseless. I used to love the works of Wes Craven years ago when he created the *A Nightmare On Elm Street* series and the *Scream Trilogy*. His newer movies, such as *They and Cursed*, were more comical than frightening. I recommend seeing this movie on a date rather than watching it for entertainment.

Rocco Raves Over Rejects

by John Rocco
Entertainment Editor

Starring Sid Haig, Bill Moseley, and Sheri Moon Zombie, *The Devil's Rejects*, sequel to *House of 1000 Corpses*, is one of the few sequels that is better than the original film, *House of 1000 Corpses*. Directed by Rob Zombie, the famous music artist who incorporated images and symbols from classic horror films into his songs, these films will send chills down your spine. Both films use the same techniques and ideas from the classic horror films such as *Frankenstein* and *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

If you've never seen *House of 1000 Corpses*, I still recommend that you see it before *The Devil's Rejects*. If you haven't, however, the basic premise, simply, is that a family of murderers lures people into traps and tortures them to death.

One of the best aspects of the sequel is the classic rock soundtrack, which includes The Allman Brothers Band's "Midnight Rider," Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird," James Gang's "Funk #49," "Three Dog Night's "Shambala," Terry Reid's "Seed Of Memory," and many other hits from the 70's. The band Banjo and Sullivan even makes appearances in the movie. This movie's soundtrack actually opened my mind to classic rock, and I've been listening to these bands ever since.

Set in May of 1978 in Ruggerville County, the film follows Sheriff John Wydell seeking revenge on a family of killers, known as "The Devil's Rejects." Rob Zombie gives an interesting portrayal of the killers during certain scenes of the movie as the victimized "good guys," while Wydell is seen as the merciless and sadistic "bad guy." Although it is rather early in Zombie's directing career, I think he is one of the most creative and inspiring directors today. His films demand recognition, if not admiration, for their originality. Ebert and Roeper even gave *The Devil's Rejects* "TWO THUMBS UP," and Tobe Hooper, director of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Poltergeist*, says that *House of 1000 Corpses* is "ONE HELL OF A GREAT HORROR MOVIE." I know many adults will be appalled by these films, but I firmly believe that these movies

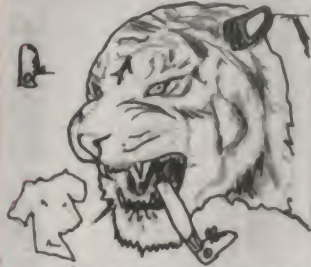
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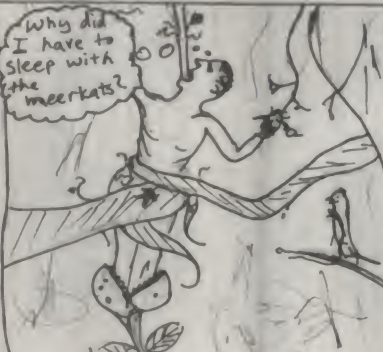
ALTERNATE ENDINGS to Life of Pi

by T. CORTS

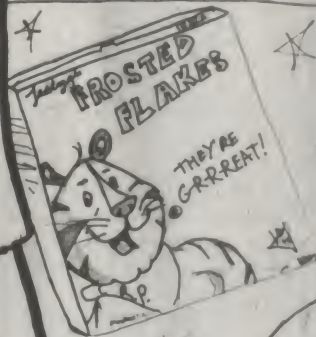
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